

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 162330
ORIGIN NEA-11

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND
PA/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/EGY - MR. MARTHINSEN
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

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O 262154Z JUN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USNATO
UNCLASSIFIED

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AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
JCS WASHDC 0000
USCINCEUR
DOD

CIA
USICA
NSC
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS POUCH

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 AM

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JUNE 26

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR JUNE 26, 1978.
FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

Q. THERE WAS A REPORT IN "THE WASHINGTON POST" ON
SATURDAY, THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE GOING TO PREVENT AMERICAN
PROFESSORS FROM TEACHING AT A WEST BANK UNIVERSITY. I
DONT KNOW IF YOU SAW THAT AND I DONT KNOW THAT ARE ARE
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PREPARED WITH SOME COMMENT ON IT. THE EXPULSION, OR THE
INVALIDATION OF THEIR PERMITS.

A. NO, I'M SORRY, I AM NOT.

Q. I WONDERED IF THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD ANY COMMENT ON
THE ISRAELIS IMPOSING DIFFICULTIES ON PALESTINIAN AGITA-
TION.

A. NO, I DONT HAVE ANY COMMENT. I DONT HAVE ANYTHING
BEFORE ME ON THAT.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THE ISRAELI CABINET STATE-
MENT YESTERDAY?

A. NO, I HAVE NO DIRLCT COMMENT. WE ARE NOT GOING
TO COMMENT ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS THAT
YOU KNOW WE ARE HAVING -- IN AN ATTEMPT TO GET ACTIVE
NEGOTIATIONS RESUMED -- NOR AM I GOING TO HAVE ANY
COMMENT SPEAKING SPECIFICALLY TO YOU ON STATEMENTS BY
THE PARTIES AT THIS TIME.

Q. WHAT ABOUT ITINERARY ARRANGEMENTS -- CAN YOU COMMENT
ON WHERE WE STAND?

A. I AM SORRY, VARIOUS SUGGESTIONS HAVE BEEN PUT FORWARD.

IN OUR GENERAL CONSULTATIONS WE ARE NOT RULING ANYTHING OUT. BUT WE DO NOT HAVE ANY DECISIONS ON AGENDA, OR POSSIBLE FORMS.

Q. WHAT IS IT AT THIS STAGE THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS TRYING TO DO SPECIFICALLY?

A. I THINK THE SPECIFIC STATEMENT ON THAT ONE IS THAT OUR INTEREST IS IN GETTING THE PARTIES BACK INTO DIRECT UNCLASSIFIED

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NEGOTIATIONS.

Q. ON WHAT?

A. ON GENERAL APPROACHES TO PEACL IN THE AREA AND INsofar AS WHAT THE AGENDA WOULD BE, WE WOULD HOPE OBVIOUSLY, THAT THAT IS PART OF OUR CONSULTATION TO DISCOVER.

Q. I MEAN, ARE YOU STILL TRYING TO GET THEM TO AGREE TO A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES? IS THAT THE MAIN TARGET NOW?

A. I WOULDN'T WANT TO TRY TO "MAIN TARGET" IT. I THINK THE FORMULATION A WHILE BACK WAS THAT WL WERE WORKING ON SIMULTANEOUS APPROACHES. THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES REMAINS IMPORTANT. SIMILARLY, THE DISCUSSION OF CONCRETE PROPOSALS THAT EITHER SIDE MIGHT HAVE IS ALSO IMPORTANT. BUT I REALLY COULDN'T GO MUCH BEYOND THAT.

Q. DO YOU REGARD THE EGYPTIAN IDEAS ABOUT THE WEST BANK AND GAZA AS A CONCRETE PROPOSAL? OR DO YOU REGARD IT AS PRECONDITIONS -- REALIZING THAT THIS IS MINED TERRAIN.

A. YES, IT'S MINED ENOUGH -- BUT MY GENERAL POSITION IS

THAT AT THIS POINT I DONT HAVE ANY COMMENT ON ANYTHING INsofar AS THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF OUR DISCUSSIONS ARE CONCERNED -- OR ACTIONS OR STATEMENTS BY EITHER OF THE PARTIES.

Q. ARE WE WALKING THE EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL AROUND TO THE PARTIES THE WAY YOU WOULD A NORMAL PROPOSAL? OR ARE WE JUST TREATING THEM AS SOMETHING THAT THE EGYPTIANS HAVE UNCLASSIFIED

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RAISED AND IT'S NOT FOR US TO MOVE IT ACROSS THE BORDERS, OR DO ANYTHING ELSE WITH IT?

A. I DONT KNOW THE SPECIFIC ANSWER TO THAT SPECIFIC

QUESTION, I.D., I DONT KNOW WHETHER WL ARE HAND-CARRYING IT TO ISRAEL OR NOT. I WOULD, OF COURSE, NOTE THE CABINET ACTION THAT ISRAEL TOOK IN THAT REGARD.

Q. BUT DID YOU GET THE EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS?

A. YES, IT'S MY UNDERSTANDING THAT WE HAVE IT.

Q. COULD YOU TAKE THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT WE CARRIED IT TO THE ISRAELIS?

A. YES, I WILL TAKE THAT QUESTION.

Q. THE EGYPTIANS JUST SAID THAT THEY HAVEN', FINISHED IT.

Q. IS IT A PROPOSAL? WHAT IS IT THAT YOU HAVE AN OUTLINE OF?

A. JUST THE THINKING OF THE EGYPTIANS -- AS WE DO THE THINKING OF THE ISRAELIS AT THIS TIME.

Q. IS MR. CHRISTOPHER GOING WITH VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE?

A. WHEN I LAST ASKED THAT QUESTION, WHICH HAPPENS ,O HAVE BEEN, UNFORTUNATELY SOME DAYS AGO, I UNDERSTOOD THAT THAT WAS A POSSIBILITY. I ALSO HAVE BEEN TOLD REPEATEDLY, THAT FOR MEMBERS OF THE PARTY WHO WERE GOING WITH THE VICE PRESIDENT -- THE PLACE TO ASK IS THE VICE PRESIDENT. I AM NOT SURE.

Q. COULD YOU TELL US WHAT THE UNITED STATES KNOWS ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH YEMEN? WE DONT KNOW ANYTHING BEYOND UNCLASSIFIED

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WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN IN PRESS REPORTS; I.E., WE DON'T KNOW THE ACCURACY OF THOSE REPORTS. WE SIMPLY KNOW WHAT IS CONTAINED IN THEM, AND PARTICULARLY FROM IRAQ. IRAQI NEWS SOURCES. NOW I SIMPLY DONT HAVE ANYTHING BEYOND

HAT. DO YOU WANT TO GO BEYOND -- TO NORTH YEMEN?

Q. YES.

A. FOLLOWING THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT AHMAD AL-GHASHMI, THE YAR PARLIAMENT APPOINTED A FOUR-MAN REPUBLICAN COUNCIL. THE FORMER SPEAKER OF THE PARLIAMENT IS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL. WL UNDERSTAND THAT THAT IS AN INTERIM ARRANGEMENT UNTIL THE PARLIAMENT CAN HOLD ELECTIONS FOR A NEW PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC.

OUR EMBASSY HAS REPORTED THAT THE CAPITAL IS QUIET AND THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY ARE SAFE.

INSOFAR AS THE ASSASSINATION ITSELF, WE DO NOT HAVE INFORMATION ON QUESTIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY OR THE LIKE, BEYOND NOTHING THAT WE UNDERSTAND THAT AN ENVOY FROM THE PEOPLES DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN WAS VISITING THE PRESIDENT OF NORTH YEMEN WHEN A BRIEFCASE IN THE ENVOY'S HAND EXPLODED, KILLING THE ENVOY IMMEDIATELY AND MORTALLY WOUNDING THE PRESIDENT. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING FURTHER ON THAT.

SHORTLY AFTER THE ASSASSINATION, THE NORTH YEMENI GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT IT SEVERED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH SOUTH YEMEN; AND IN A STATEMENT ACCOMPANYING THIS ANNOUNCEMENT, NORTH YEMEN'S FOREIGN MINISTER ACCUSED SOUTH YEMEN OF BEING BEHIND THE ASSASSINATION OF THE
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PRESIDENT. NORTH YEMENI PRIME MINISTER GHANI, WHO WILL CONTINUE AS HEAD OF GOVERNMENT, HAS ALSO BEEN NAMED TO HEAD A COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH. I WOULD SIMPLY NOTE IN THIS CONNECTION THAT SOUTH YEMEN HAS DENIED INVOLVEMENT IN THE KILLING.

AS SOON AS WE RECEIVED WORD OF THE ASSASSINATION SECRETARY VANCE SENT A MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER IN WHICH HE EXPRESSED THE SHOCK AND SADNESS AT LEARNING OF THE TRAGIC DEATH OF THE PRESIDENT UNDER SUCH BRUTAL CIRCUMSTANCES -- AND WW HAVE A COPY OF THAT IF YOU WISH IT.

THE SECRETARY ALSO SAID THAT HE SUPPORTS THE EFFORTS THAT THE YAR GOVERNMENT IS MAKING TO ASSURE THAT THE YAR CONTINUES TOWARD ITS GOALS OF DEVELOPMENT AND STABILITY IN THIS DIFFICULT PERIOD.

AS I THINK YOU REMEMBER (THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN INTERESTED IN THIS AREA), WE HAD PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED THAT JOSEPH W.

TWINAM, OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT, IS CURRENTLY IN JIDDA, SAUDI ARABIA, AND WAS ENROUTE TO ADEN TO DISCUSS WITH SOUTH YEMENI OFFICIALS IN AN EXPLORATORY AND NONCOMMITTAL WAY, THE PROBLEMS WHICH EXIST BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS ON A VARIETY OF ISSUES. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, FOLLOWING THE ASSASSINATION, WE HAVE INFORMED THE SOUTH YEMENI GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE BRITISH OUR PROTECTING POWER IN ADEN, THAT WE HAVE DECIDED NOT TO SEND THE TWINAM MISSION TO ADEN AT THIS TIME.

WE HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE, HOWEVER, OF HIS PRESENCE IN THE AREA TO INSTRUCT HIM TO GO TO SANA, THE NORTH YEMEN CAPITAL, TO MEET WITH NORTH YEMENI LEADERS. HE WILL BE CARRYING WITH HIM A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CARTER TO

REPUBLICAN COUNCIL CHAIRMAN AL-ARASHI.
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NOW, GOING BACK TO YOUR ORIGINAL QUESTION ABOUT SOUTH YEMEN, I JUST WANT TO REPEAT AGAIN THAT WE REALLY KNOW NOTHING BEYOND THE PRESS REPORTS. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF THE PRESENCE OF ANY AMERICANS IN SOUTH YEMEN, AND WHILE WE HAVE SEEN THE SAME PRESS SPECUALTION THAT YOU HAVE, THAT LINKS THE UPRISING IN SOUTH YEMEN AS REPORTED BY THE IRAQI PRESS TO THE ASSASSINATION OF THE NORTH YEMEN PRESIDENT, WE SIMPLY DONT HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON THAT.

Q. IS IT YOUR INTENTION OR EXPECTATION THAT THE SWITCHING OF THE TWINAM MISSION FROM ADEN TO SANA WILL BE SEEN AS AN INDICATION THAT WE DO IN FACT HOLD SOUTH YEMEN SOMEHOW RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ASSASSINATION?

A. I THINK THAT THE BASIC DECISION WAS MADE FOR THE REASONS THAT I HAVE SUGGESTED, WHICH WAS SIMPLY TO BOTH INDICATE OUR CONCERN, AND OUR SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT IN THE WAKE OF THE ASSASSINATION -- AND NOT LEAVING THE IMPLICATION OF OUR ASSESSING RESPONSIBILITY.

Q. YES, BUT WHY CANCEL THE OTHER VISIT?

A. I THINK FOR THE VERY REASON I HAVE JUST NOTED: THAT AT THE MOMENT WE FELT IT WOULD BE MORE USEFUL FOR HIM TO GO.

Q. BUT YOU ARE NOT JUST SIMPLY ANNOUNCING A POSTPONEMENT OF THE VISIT TO ADEN. THE IMPLICATION SEEMS TO ME V RY CLEAR, THAT YOU SOMEHOW DRAW A CONNECTION BETWEEN HE ASSASSINATION AND CANCELLING THE VISIT AS IF YOU ARE HOLDING THE PDRY RESPONSIBLE.

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A. I CANT DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ACTION.

Q. WERE YOU AWARE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF UNRESIN SOUTH YEMEN WHEN YOU CANCELLED IT? I MEAN IT WAS CANCELLED A DAY OR TWO BEFORE THE PRESENT UNREST.

A. NO. I CANT SAY THAT ANYTHING WAS ANTICIPATED.

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Q. WAS THER3 ANY CONTENT TO THE MESSAGE FROM CARTER OTHER THAN JUST ABSTRACT SUPPORT?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO INTO THE MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT.

Q. GOING BACK TO THE EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL, WERE THEIR SUGGESTIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE UNITED STATES' REQUEST FOR A CLARIFICATION FROM EGYPT?

A. AGAIN I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO INTO THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH ANY OF THE PARTIES.

Q. WERE THEY DONE AT THE EGYPTIAN INITIATIVE?

A. YES. AS I SAY, I REALLY AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO MUCH BEYOND WHERE I AM.

Q. THERE WAS A LOT OF TALK ABOUT PROJECTED FOR IGNN MINISTERS' MEETING IN LONDON. IS THAT STILL UNDER ACTIVE DISCUSSION?

A. LET ME SAY AGAIN WE ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF ACTIVE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PARTIES ON HOW TO MOVE THE PEACE PROCESS FORWARD. A NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS HAVE BEEN PUT FORTH. THOSE CONSULTATIONS ARE CONTINUING AND IN THE ABSENCE OF SOMETHING DEFINITIVE TO TELL YOU, I CANNOT TELL YOU ANYTHING. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING FURTHER.
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Q. THERE WAS A ONE-PARAGRAPH STORY IN SATURDAY'S "WASHINGTON POST" QUOTING THE PRESIDENT OF CHAD AS SAYING THAT THOUSANDS OF LIBYAN TROOPS SUPPORTED BY CUBAN TROOPS HAVE INVADDED THE COUNTRY IN SUPPORT OF CHADIAN REBELS. CAN YOU FLESH THAT OUT A LITTLE?

A. LET ME ANSWER THE QUESTION DIRECTLY: WE HAVE NO INDEPENDENT CONFIRMATION THAT CUBAN MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE OPERATING IN CHAD. WE DO KNOW THAT LIBYAN MILITARY PERSONNEL HAVE OCCUPIED A STRIP OF LAND IN NORTHERN CHAD KNOWN AS THE AOU/ZOU STRIP, WHICH LIBYA CLAIMS UNDER AN

UNRATIFIED 1935 TREATY BETWEEN FRANCE AND ITALY, TWO FORMER COLONIAL POWERS IN THAT REGION. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, HOWEVER, LIBYA'S CLAIM ON THAT TERRITORY IS NOT RECOGNIZED BY ANY OTHER COUNTRY. WE ARE UNABLE TO CONFIRM THAT LIBYAN MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE OPERATING OUTSIDE THAT STRIP THAT IS CLAIMED BY THEM.

IT HAS BEEN KNOWN FOR SOME TIME, AND WE HAVE SAID, THAT LIBYA HAS BEEN PROVIDING CHADIAN REBELS WITH ARMS, WITH TRAINING AND WITH EQUIPMENT, BUT BEYOND THAT, I SIMPLY HAVE NO CONFIRMATION.

Q. IS THERE ANY DECISION ON THE TRUCKS FOR LIBYA?

A. I ASKED THAT BEFORE I LEFT HERE THURSDAY AFTERNOON.

THERE WASN'T THEN. I KNOW OF NOTHING NOW.

Q. ACTUALLY, IT'S KIND OF A LARGER QUESTION NOW. THE
"NEW YORK TIMES" HAD A PIECE ABOUT THE STATE DEPARTMENT
CONSIDERING EMBARGOES ON SHIPMENTS OF EQUIPMENT TO
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ALGERIAL, POSSIBLY TO LIBYA, TO ALL SORTS OF COUNTRIES
THAT REPORTEDLY SUPPORT TERRORISM. I DONT KNOW IF YOU'VE
ACCEPTED THAT YET.

A. IN SOME INSTANCES, WE HAVE ISSUED PAPERS THAT SUGGEST
THAT SOME COUNTRIES DID. INsofar AS WHAT WE'RE CONSIDERING,
AGAIN I'M NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO MUCH INTO THAT. VANCE

NOTE BY OCT: POUCHED ALGIERS.

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